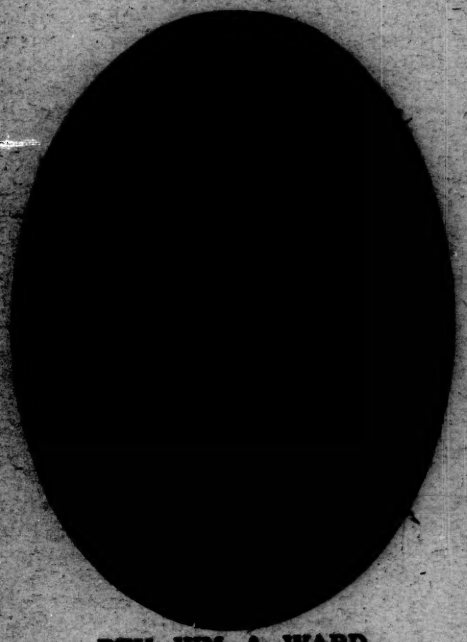
The Christian Socialist

The Golden Rule Against the Rule of Gold

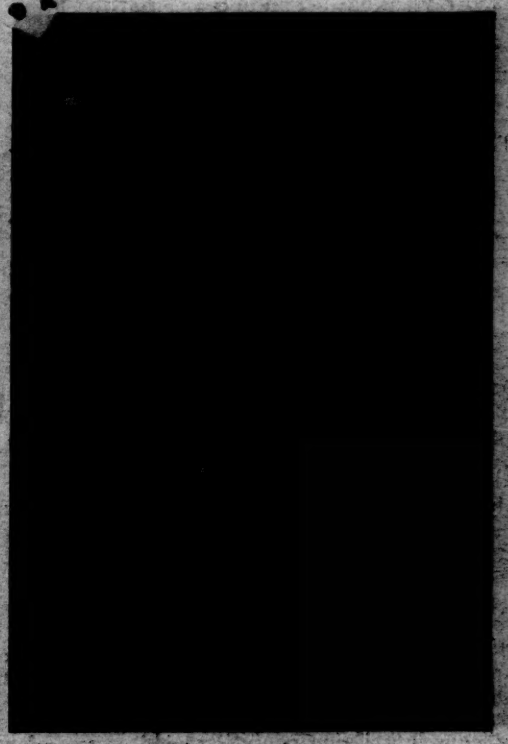
Vol. VIII. No. 19. CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, THURSDAY, MAY 11, 1911 One Dollar Per Year



REV. WM. A. WARD
Re-Elected General Secretary of the Christian Socialist Fellowship

Resolved, That the Christian Socialist Fellowship highly appreciates the earnest and effective work done by the CHRISTIAN SOCIALIST in advertising the cause of Socialism, and especially commends its brave stand for the highest morality in private and political life. And that we express our approval of the action of the CHRISTIAN SOCIALIST in exposing the facts in the Barnes case and its demand for a real investigation. We take this action not in criticism of nor desire to interfere with the machinery of the Socialist Party, but because, in loyalty to the Party, we believe this action to be for the Party's good in helping to preserve its good name.

Adopted by the General Conference of the Christian Socialist Fellowship at St. Louis, April 27-May 1.



REV. W. D. P. BLISS
Elected General Treasurer of the Christian Socialist Fellowship

SIXTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE of the CHRISTIAN SOCIALIST FELLOWSHIP (AMERICAN SECTION)

Held at the First Christian Church, St. Louis, Mo., April 27th to May 1, 1911.

The weather bureau at St. Louis must belong to the Civic Federation or the National Manufacturers' Association—or both—certainly it does not favor Socialism; for it rained every day during the General Conference of the Christian Socialist Fellowship. Jesus spoke of Satan as "the prince of the power of the air," and from the atmosphere at St. Louis during the Conference it is evident that Socialism finds small favor with his mammonistic majesty. And the very next day the weather was glorious.

Owing to the continued inclemency of the weather the attendance at the Conference from St. Louis was comparatively small, but the program was excellent.

The address of the General Secretary, Rev. Wm. A. Ward, of St. Louis, the various addresses of Rev. W. D. P. Bliss of New York, the welcome address by Rev. P. H. Roberts, the response by Rev. Edward Ellis Carr of Chicago, the sermon by Rev. T. J. Thompson of Palmyra, Ill., the addresses by Rev. Frank Allen, Paris, Mo.; Myra M. Kern, Maryville, Mo., and Rev. Wm. A. Prosser of Pittsburg, were all well received. They were full of instruction and inspiration.

The congregational singing from Moyer's "Songs of Socialism" was very hearty and enjoyable, and the people were given a rare treat in the solos rendered on two occasions by Miss Hedwig Fritsch, a vocalist of high talent and training, and by the great-organ solos of Miss Edith Lazar, a pupil of Miss Fritsch.

The usual conference routine was followed in the business sessions whose record may be found in the Conference minutes.

The St. Louis comrades distinguished themselves for courtesy and hospitality, and the ladies of the First Christian Church, in which the meetings were held, furnished attractive and tasteful meals at noon and evening.

Owing to the late change of the seat of the Conference from Philadelphia to St. Louis, the St. Louis committee did not have time to arrange as full a program of Socialist addresses in the churches as is usual at conference, yet several Socialist preachers filled pulpits either Sunday morning or evening, accounts of whose meetings have not yet been furnished us.

Carr at St. Leo's Hall

One of the most notable incidents in connection with the Conference was the opening of St. Leo's Roman Catholic Temperance hall, connected with St. Leo's Church, to a Socialist lecture by the editor of the Christian Socialist. By courtesy of Father Colley and others, the meeting was welcomed, and the officers and many members of the young men's sodality of St. Leo's Church attended. The speaker was introduced by an officer of the sodality and his comprehensive and fiery address was received with great interest and sympathetic attention. Many questions were asked and answered after the lecture. The audience was the largest that attended any meeting of the Conference, and we hope that this is only one of many Socialist lectures soon to be delivered in Catholic parish halls.

GROWTH OF FELLOWSHIP

The net gain of new center organizations for the year 1910-11 was 17. The net gain of members was 787.

The financial receipts of the General Office amounted to $2,433.25. Expenses about the same.

STANDING COMMITTEES

We have delayed this issue to get as full a report of the conference of the Fellowship as possible; but the minutes of the Conference have not arrived as we go to press two days late.

The General Executive Committee of 25, the Board of Trustees and the Standing Committees of the Christian Socialist Fellowship elected by the St. Louis Conference are as follows:

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF 25

Carl D. Thompson, George H. Strobell, Wm. A. Prosser, Robert Whitaker, E. E. Carr, James L. Smiley, Eliot White, J. P. Taylor, Horace Mann, John D. Merrill, A. O. Alexander, George D. Hall, Jr., Elizabeth J. Moyer, Bessie M. Womsley, Solon T. Klotz, E. J. Helms, W. W. Reese, Edward D. Martin, Mary B. Mason, H. P. Moyer, D. C. Sherman, Albert Ehrgott, Edwin Markham, Frank Allen, W. D. Thayer.

FELLOWSHIP TRUSTEES

For 3 year term—E. E. Carr, W. D. P. Bliss, W. A. Prosser.

For two year term—W. A. Ward, T. J. Thompson, H. P. Moyer.

For one year term—Geo. H. Strobell, Bessie Womsley, Jas. L. Smiley.

COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTION

W. A. Prosser, W. D. P. Bliss, W. A. Ward, E. E. Carr, Eliot White.

COMMITTEE ON INCORPORATION

The committee on incorporation was continued with instructions to incorporate in Illinois as per the unanimous vote of the Pittsburg Conference. The Committee is as follows: W. A. Ward, H. P. Moyer, E. E. Carr, A. B. Francisco.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

H. C. Reed, Benj. Eefting, Bessie Womsley, W. A. Ward, W. H. Tomlins.

COMMITTEE ON LITERATURE

W. A. Prosser, W. A. Ward, W. D. P. Bliss, E. E. Carr, H. P. Moyer.

COMMITTEES ON PROGRAM

On general program—Carr, Bliss, Ward, Prosser, Womsley.

On music—Moyer and Carr to confer with comrades where the Conference meets.

TREASURER'S ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHRISTIAN SOCIALIST FELLOWSHIP APRIL 1, 1911

Receipts

Balance in Treasury, April 1, 1910		$83.86
Dues	$ 342.96	
Literature	82.98	
Supplies	17.40	
Christian Socialist Subscriptions	63.32	
Contributions	418.53	
Lectures by Gen. Secretary	1,424.21	
		$2,349.40
		$2,433.26

Expenditures

Printing	$ 45.19	
Postage, telegrams, M. O.'s	85.20	
Office supplies, typewriter, etc	61.85	
Literature and supplies	56.98	
Christian Socialist Sub Cards	16.84	
Traveling expenses, Gen. Secretary	837.95	
Salary overdue April 1, 1910, Gen. Secretary	113.00	
Salary from April 1, 1910, to April 1, 1911	1,200.00	
		$2,417.01
Cash Balance on hand April 1, 1911		16.25
		$2,433.26

Harvey P. Moyer, Gen. Treasurer.

The Christian Socialist Fellowship

Annual Address of the General Secretary, Rev. Wm. A. Ward, to the Sixth General Conference, Convened at St. Louis, Mo., April 27—May 1, 1911

Some time ago Josiah Strong predicted that the next great revival would be a social revival. Others have uttered similar prophesies. That revival has begun in the Christian Socialist movement and is sweeping on with remarkable swiftness, widening and increasing in power every day. Everywhere the social conscience is awakening. Bold prophets are voicing the reviving, revolutionary message. The Christian Socialist movement is the concrete manifestation of this quickening spirit which is abroad in the land. Others have talked about this revival. We are experiencing it.

Capitalism in the church condemns it; politics in the church attempts to exclude it from the pulpits: Pharisaism criticises and scoffs; ignorance, prejudice and bigotry unite to protect the church from its invasion, but all to no avail. Like a divine contagion, it is breaking out everywhere. Many a conservative, self-centered and satisfied congregation has been shocked when, suddenly, without warning, like a broadside from a modern battleship crashing against a sleeping fortress, a message has been thundered from the pulpit, striking blow after blow on the structure of the false, godless civilization which capitalism has erected: or, with the same abruptness, some preacher who has always painted beautiful pictures for his congregation or soothed and petted them into a comfortable spiritual stupor, has thrown a search light from the pulpit which exposed to the gaze of all the hideous, horrifying conditions and crimes of a commercialism, destitute of conscience and pity.

The New Revival

True religion is coming to life. It is not confined to any one place, movement or class. Like the manifestation of spring it is in evidence everywhere and, like the re-creation of that season, this religious resurrection can not be arrested or controlled. The effort to keep it out of the church is futile. It is inevitable.

This revival will be the greatest the world has ever seen and different from all others. It goes deeper and reaches farther backward and forward. It goes as deep as the soul of man. It reaches back to Jerusalem, recovering the religion of Jesus, who inaugurated a revolutionary religious movement, which made remarkable progress for a time, suffered under Nero and Diocletian, was captured by a corrupt capitalistic state under Constantine and later killed by a political ecclesiasticism. It will move forward through the struggle with organized greed to the overthrow of the Mammon of unrighteousness and the establishment of the Co-Operative Commonwealth, the new earthly order wherein will dwell righteousness. It resumes after the lapse of centuries the mission of social regeneration and reconstruction (and these must go together or neither is possible) which is the natural sequence, if many, accepting Christ, are born again. Accepting the principles of Christianity, it proposes that Christians shall go about it deliberately and intelligently to put them into practice in the business of producing and distributing the necessary things of life, which, more than anything else, conditions the spiritual life of man and determines his physical state and moral character.

This new evangelism does not preach abstract truths and vague generalities and then sit down in complacent inactivity, while countless thousands are robbed by business methods, crushed by industrial despotism and doomed by an unchristian system to a condition of poverty and wretchedness which ruins, degrades and damns. It does not appeal to the selfishness of human nature to con. .o Jesus in order only to save one's own soul from eternal fires of another world, leaving him ignorant as to the unchristian character and awful consequences of the every day economic processes that fill this world with hell. It teaches men how to practice Christianity in every sphere of human endeavor and give this world the benefit of it, freeing the world from tenements, sweat shops, child labor, enforced idleness, poverty and all that interferes with the health, happiness and intellectual and spiritual development of men in the image of God. It teaches them how to establish the Kingdom of God among men, bringing peace and plenty and giving to millions of individuals a chance and an incentive to rise above the mere plane of animal existence and enjoy a more abundant life. It comes "to preach the Good News to the poor; to heal the broken hearted; to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." It looks upon the multitudes of those who have toiled hard and suffered long and repeats the words of the Master, "Blessed are ye poor; for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that hunger now; for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep; for ye shall laugh. Blessed are ye (undesirable citizens), when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice; for, behold, your reward is great in heaven; for in like manner did their fathers unto the prophets."

The preaching of mere generalities and abstractions never righted a wrong, nor abolished an evil, nor saved a soul since the world began. This movement deals with concrete things—with methods, deeds, institutions. It applies the remedy to the disease. It tears down the structure of evil and builds the good in its place. Like the early Christians, the Christian Socialists propose to practice what they preach. Others prophecy that the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of God and that a millennium of righteousness and peace will come some time. We are going to MAKE the kingdom of this world the kingdom of God and inaugurate the millennium NOW.

True Individual Conversion

Christian Socialists recognize the necessity of converting the individual, even more than others; for we believe he should be really converted, so that he becomes no longer a self-centered, sordid individual whose practice in the business of life is wicked, but a Social Christian who loses his life in the life of the whole, loving his fellow men as himself and living to serve. To practice the principles of Christianity in an age of machinery and the collective methods necessitates the complete socialization of the machinery and method of production and distribution. This must be a part of the constructive Christian message to the world today.

This revival is not a mere doctrinal revival, nor an emotional spasm. It will not end in a new creed or denomination, nor will it spend itself in mere emotionalism. It directs the mighty impulse of religious life into definite, practical lines of constructive work. It goes about it in a scientific manner to work out the salvation of the race. Christianity is as good for this world as for the next, if we will accept its ethics and practice them. Socialism is collective Christianity.

Some say to us, "But men must be converted before they will practice the principles of Socialism. Therefore, the thing to do is to convert individuals to the principles—to change their hearts." I reply, "Millions are converted, or supposed to be, and we want them to practice the principles they are supposed to have accepted." It is often those who claim to be Christians with whom we have the greatest difficulty. It is a strange situation when many outside of the church want to practice Christianity and many inside refuse.

The time has arrived for Christians to abandon this selfish, heartless, Godless system which creates hell on earth, or the entire working class, which is beginning at last to understand, will forsake the church and, misled by false religion, they will turn against the church as a hypocritical, detestable tool of their masters, used to deceive the people and cover the infamy and perfidy of the class that loves only self and seeks only limitless riches, corrupting government, degrading commerce and destroying God's children, physically and spiritually—even the innocent, helpless little ones—in order to get possession of the wealth produced by labor.

Only the Christian Socialist movement can save Christianity from that fate. Thousands of Christians are hearing the message and responding to the call to service. Position, business, friends, persecution—nothing can keep them back. They are willing to forsake all if necessary in this cause. Preachers will lose pulpits and salaries rather than let conscience rot in cowardly silence. Business men will lose money rather than be partners with the devil in trade.

Capturing the Church

This movement can not be kept out of the church. It is futile to try. We WILL speak out. THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM SHALL BE HEARD IN THE HOUSE OF GOD. The cunning politician on the church board and the self-condemned capitalist in the pew, who fears the direct, uncompromising, unequivocal message of Christian Socialism, shall not betray Christ and drive the prophet from the place dedicated to God and truth.

We shall preach and work and we shall see Christian love triumph over selfishness and greed. We shall see a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. There shall be peace on earth and good will among men. There shall be universal plenty and no one shall worry about the morrow over what he shall eat or drink or wear. We are tired of war and competition, of hunger and cold, of a greedy commercialism that schemes and lies and poisons and grabs, and of the heartless exploitation that seizes the product of labor, even grabbing the bread from the hungry mouths of little children. We are going to abolish these monstrous iniquities by reconstructing the system of production and distribution and establishing the laws of the kingdom of God in the economic world. There may be, for a long time to come, men who would like to rob, but, under Socialism, they can not do it by legitimate business methods. It will have to be done by plain stealing which will land them in undesirable quarters.

He who opposes this fights against God. He who does not believe that this can be done has no faith in God or men or the message of the Bibie. He who does believe it and, for fear of scorn or financial loss, holds aloof from the movement is false to God and man and religion.

A Wicked Civilization

Society is now divided economically into two classes engaged in perpetual struggle. We produce more of the necessary things than are consumed; yet multitudes of the producers suffer in poverty and hunger. Hordes of idle men roam at large, looking for a chance to make an honest living which is denied them. Tenements, slums and sweat shops disfigure our cities. Prisons, asylums, poorhouses, rescue homes and soup houses confront us everywhere. Crime is on the increase. Preventable diseases carry off hundreds of thousands annually. And this is called civilization.

Millions of Christians (?) go to church (when they feel like it). Tens of thousands of preachers are supported and churches call the people to worship all over the land. Yet two-thirds of the people of this country are outside of the church and at least half of those who are inside have no good reason for being there. Selfishness and greed still reign in the hearts of men in the church as well as out. Riches on earth is the object of endeavor and a noted bishop says: "The big financiers

of Wall street are surely following in the footsteps of Jesus." The business of cheating, scheming, fighting, robbing, killing goes on daily in the land whose dollars bear the blasphemous inscription, "In God we trust." Every Nation is an armed camp and the little boys are seduced with a false idea of the glory of war and filled with the lust to kill human beings in the wholesale butchery which advances the interests of trade at a terrible cost of blood and tears, of broken hearts and devastated homes. A money class, drunk with power, wrings the very life blood from the workers, and little children are dragged from their hovels and enslaved to the machines of the masters. And this is called Christendom.

THIS IS NOT CIVILIZATION. THIS IS NOT CHRISTENDOM. IT IS THE REIGN OF CAPITALISM. TO CIVILIZE CIVILIZATION AND TO CHRISTIANIZE CHRISTENDOM IS THE TASK FOR THIS AGE AND IT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED ONLY THROUGH SOCIALISM.

Believers Must be Converted

It is now not so much a matter of converting unbelievers as it is one of converting believers so that they will consent to practice in government, business and industry the principles of their professed religion. This subjects Christians to the severest test they have ever met. It will separate the wheat from the chaff. We shall soon see how many who profess to be Christians really are converted—are willing to live unselfishly, to be just, to practice the golden rule, to love their neighbors as themselves, to live to serve.

Jesus is coming in his kingdom. Mammon's throne is tottering. A new age is dawning as the Sun of Righteousness rises to dispell the long night of wickedness and terror. "Lift up your heads, O ye Gates, and the King of Glory shall come in."

The spirit of this new movement and its faith, hope and love are embodied in the Christian Socialist Fellowship as they are in no other body in the world. Ministers and laymen in large numbers are rallying under its banners, the blood red flag of brotherhood and the blood stained cross of calvary. Bold and aggressive, it marches at the head of the onward movement. Its position is clearly defined. It does not try to please all.

The Fellowship is still the only body in this country with a distinctly Christian and Socialist message. There are socialist organizations which make no claim to a Christian character or message and there are Christian societies which, while they are more or less socialistic, are not socialist organizations in the full sense of the term. These latter are engaged in studying social problems or teaching social truths but they have no specific remedy to offer, no practical program of action.

Message of the Fellowship

The Fellowship has a definite, constructive message. It is committed to the International Socialist movement and advocates the practical program of action in which all real socialists agree. It advocates the abolishment of war and competition and the abandonment of the profits and wages system. It stands for pure political democracy, and the complete socialization of the processes of production and distribution through the collective ownership of the industries and utilities and democratic co-operation. WE BELIEVE THE WORLD AT WORK SHOULD BE ORGANIZED ON THE BASIS OF SERVICE INSTEAD OF PROFIT. We teach these things because they are right in themselves and also because they are in harmony with the ethics of Jesus, providing a method approved of God of accomplishing the deliverance of His children from the conditions which deprave and destroy. This reconstruction is absolutely necessary in order to establish a social and economic system based upon justice in which the law of love, reigning in the hearts of men, may govern also in the world of business and industry where they are associated in daily life.

All Christians who believe in this Gospel of the Kingdom and desire to see this mission of Social salvation accomplished should identify themselves with the organization which has snatched the cross from the guilty hands of Capitalism that has betrayed Christ for gold, broken every command of God in the pursuit of riches and filled the lives of countless millions of His children with sorrow and suffering.

The Fellowship needs more members, more workers and more money. There are thousands who believe in Christian Socialism who do not help us. Those who believe in this cause should not stand back, mere idle onlookers while others bear the burden of work and expense. Not one-fifth of those who are convinced by our message join the organization. Even among the ministers, the per cent is the same. We must have thousands of new members.

In the past the members of the Fellowship generally have not made any special effort to secure new recruits. This should now be done. Every new member who will contribute his share financially and do his part in the work will add to the results. Every member of the Fellowship should try this year to get others to join. We should have a contest and see who can bring in the largest number.

The number of dues paying members is not large enough to provide funds sufficient to support the general office. We should build up the membership until the dues will furnish a fund adequate to meet the needs of the General Organization.

Workers Needed

The cause needs workers. I do not mean salaried lecturers. There are plenty of men longing to take the field as lecturers, if we will arrange the dates for them and pay them a salary. We need people who have some other occupation which provides a living who will devote time and effort to lecturing in their home cities or nearby points or who will arrange such meetings for other speakers. We want workers who will help to enlarge the movement and raise money, rather than workers to be paid from the general funds.

The most serious problem confronting the organization is that of finance. The General Treasurer has worked hard at this and, considering the difficulties of the task, has done remarkably well as his report will show. Still our funds are inadequate. There is a great work which can be done, but not without money.

There has not been as great activity in the department of District work as there should have been. No District Conferences were held last year. It must not be understood that nothing was done; for several of our District Secretaries were as active as circumstances would permit. That more was not done is due, partly, to the fact that some of these appointed did not undertake anything and, partly, to the fact that the General Secretary, spending most of his time in lecture work, was not able to plan District work and assist the secretaries. David Morris in Colorado, E. B. Barnes in Oklahoma, T. W. Williams in California, A. O. Alexander in Alberta, Canada, E. S. James in Ontario and James L. Smiley in Maryland were all more or less active with splendid results, especially in Oklahoma and Colorado.

The Center work presents another problem. It has been learned by experience that it is very difficult to start a Center in a small town which will live. Several have been formed only to die immediately.

Some of our Centers in the cities did splendid work during the past year. Those in Pittsburgh, Providence, Chicago, Buffalo, St. Louis, Los Angeles, Washington and Shawnee have been most active and their work has been very successful.

Suggestions which will help the Centers organized in small towns will be welcome.

A Successful Year

On the whole it has been a very successful year. Our membership has been doubled. Among the new members are many ministers who will be able to do much for the cause. A number of new Centers have been organized. Churches where the message had never been heard before have been entered by our speakers and thousands of Christian people have been aroused and have caught the spirit of the revolution.

We have demonstrated the success of our methods and proved the need of such an organization. It is now generally recognized among Socialists that the Fellowship has a place and an important part to play in the Socialist movement.

Words of approval and encouragement have come from every quarter. One Comrade in Oklahoma wrote recently, "We have taken seventeen new members into our Local since you were here. We had a revival which added greatly to our strength as they all seem unanimous in believing that Christianity and Socialism go together, though they did not think that before you came." This shows the practical value of our work.

The results have been worth more than the time, money and strength consecrated to the cause by our workers. For every dollar contributed, a Socialist has been made. Let none lose their ardor or lag behind in the work. So far the battle is ours. Let us go on conquering and to conquer. None should get too busy in the business of taking care of himself and his business interests to devote some time and strength to the grand cause. The Cause is more important than any individual. He who sacrifices in this struggle for freedom shall be repaid a hundredfold. Anyway, what shall it profit if a man shall gain business success and lose his own soul?

There was greater activity among the Centers during the past twelve months than in any previous year. They have been urged to use the Educational Campaign plan and several conducted very successful lecture courses, continuing from three days in some instances to two weeks in others. The following Centers used this plan with marked success: Providence, Philadelphia, Buffalo, Boston, Chicago, St. Louis, Pittsburgh and Los Angeles. The Buffalo lectures were given by E. E. Carr, those in Boston by George Willis Cook and the remainder by the General Secretary. Other Centers as well as the ones just mentioned gave single lectures from time to time.

The following District Secretaries have been active in the lecture work: David J. Morris, Colorado; James L. Smiley, Maryland; A. O. Alexander, Alberta, Canada; W. E. S. James, Ontario, Canada; E. B. Barnes, Oklahoma, and T. W. Williams, Southern California.

The General Treasurer has had a most difficult task. Our need has been great and he has worked ardently and persistently in the effort to raise funds. Considering the conditions and the difficulties of the task he has done remarkably well and we can not praise him too highly. He has been assisted by Mrs. Moyer and our words of appreciation and praise must include her.

The Christian Socialist has rendered a service of the greatest value to the cause and to the Fellowship as the Official Organ during the year past as well as in previous years. This great paper and its editor have been loyal and devoted to the Fellowship work and no words of commendation which we can speak can be too strong to express our appreciation. We have had all the space we needed in its columns, it has been used to solicit funds and to call for members and has been a vehicle for the spread of our message. On the other hand we have done our best to contribute to the strength and effectiveness of the paper and to increase its circulation.

The General Secretary has spent most of the time in the field, lecturing and extending the work into new Sections, about nine of the twelve months. He delivered about one hundred and ninety lectures and traveled in thirteen states. About 50,000 people heard his message.

Besides the lecture work, the executive duties and clerical work of the office were performed and the affairs of the Fellowship attended to as well as conditions made possible.

The General Executive Committee has done better work than in any previous year. There has been no dead timber on it. Every member has kept in touch with the General Secretary and made returns on the reports sent from time to time.

(The General Secretary here made several recommendations which were taken up in due course and acted upon as recorded in the minutes.)

The Bible Must Be Recaptured

By Rev W. D. P. Bliss, Author of the Encyclopedia of Social Reform, Delivered before the Christian Socialist Fellowship Conference at St. Louis

A distinguished reviser of the Bible was once introduced as a reverser of the Bible. There is truth in this. Modern capitalism has captured the Bible and tried to reverse it. It tells us that the Bible is the key to heaven. This is not true. The Bible is the key to earth. We shall never get to heaven, nor have heaven here below unless we live right now on earth. The Bible says very little about heaven. It speaks mainly about this earth. Capitalists do not like this. They do not want the Bible and religion to interfere with their rule on earth; so they teach, and clergymen friendly to capitalism teach that religion has only to do with the spiritual life and has nothing to do with the earthly social life.

This is false, as careful students of the Bible know. It is even doubtful if immortality is taught in the Old Testament and in Christ's teaching it is not greatly emphasized. What Jesus Christ emphasized was doing right on earth.

The Bible too has been taught by capitalists and by the theological supporters of capitalism to be an individualistic book. This too is false. THE BIBLE IS A SOCIALISTIC BOOK, as we shall in a moment see.

The individualistic interpretation of the Bible commenced mainly with the Protestant Reformation. This was a natural but fatal mistake. Our Protestant forefathers reacting from the false and corrupt ecclesiasticism of the mediaevel Roman church, and the false claims of its hierarchy to be the sole interpreters of the Bible, held truly to the right of private judgment, the right of everybody to read the Bible and interpret it for himself. They held truly that everybody could go immediately to God, without priest or confessor, because there was only one mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus. But these great truths have been preverted and captured by modern capitalistic theology, to teach that all life is merely individualistic and has no social basis.

Capitalism Captured Protestantism

Capitalism has largely captured Protestantism and its interpretation of the Bible in the interest of economic and capitalistic individualism. How false this is can easily be shown.

It will easily be seen that two-thirds of the Bible is the Old Testament. Now, that at least the Old Testament is socialistic is apparent to all. It is the record of God's dealings with a particular race, people and nation. Individuals indeed come into it, as they do into Socialism, but it is ever in connection with their social and national life. The Hebrew Law has been called a training in social and national righteousness. The Bible shows the historic beginnings, the genesis of this race, the giving and development of its law, the thunderings of the prophets against those who broke the law. The Law required straight Socialism. It required land for all. No individual Jew was allowed to own land in perpetuity. He could only use it till the year of Jubilee. In the Jubilee year (the fiftieth year) it reverted to the nation to be redistributed, in order that no Jew could permanently be deprived of land. If through illness or poverty any Jew had mortgaged his use of the land, he was free from his mortgage on the year of Jubilee.

"Ye may not heed it, ye haughty men
Whose hearts as rocks all cold;
But the time will come when the fiat of God
In thunder shall be told.
For the voice of the great I Am hath said
That the land shall not be sold."

The Bible Socialistic

The Hebrew law was thus socialistic on the subject of land. It was not, however, a Single Tax law. The Bible is not a Single Tax book. The Hebrew law taught not only that the natural resources of the earth should belong to God, but that society should be organized generally on a socialistic basis. It forbade interest. The Hebrew word translated "usury" means money given for the use of money. It is only capitalism that has made the Bible word to be translated usury, or exorbitant interest on the use of money. The Bible law forbids all interest on money. The Bible law thus forbids all capitalism. No wonder that capitalists and capitalistic theologians have tried to "reverse" the Bible.

But all scholars are agreed that the Bible word translated usury in the King James version really means all interest. The Hebrew did not mean that society should be composed of two classes—capitalists and working classes. By forbidding all interest, it forbade people living on investments. Under the Hebrew Law all people had to live by labor, intellectual or physical. The workers were all to own land and the landowners were all to work. The fact is that such Socialism appears on every page of the Bible. The Law required it; the history of the Jews shows its working and the failure of the Jews to enforce it. The prophets thunder against this failure on the part of individuals and of the whole nation. Witness especially Isaiah and Micah.

But this Socialistic Hebrew Law did not work, or rather the Hebrews did not obey the Law. They chose kings and all that monarchy implies. They forgot God and His law. Hence the captivity and the prophets.

Hence also Jesus Christ and the New Testament. What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, that Jesus Christ came to fulfill. He came to fulfill the Socialistic law. He said so. He said he came to fulfill the law, and we have seen how socialistic the law was. He came to make individuals obey the socialistic law. This the capitalistic individualists deny. They refuse to accept the literal words of Jesus. They explain them away. They give them another spiritual sense. It is perfectly plain why they do. It is not convenient for them to admit that Jesus came to fulfill a Socialistic law, to bring Socialism on earth. So they "reverse" the New Testament as well as the Old, and claim that Jesus came to abolish the law and bring in Love. Jesus Christ expressly denied this. He said he came not to destroy the law and the prophets but to fulfill them.

Christ Came to Fulfill the Law

Jesus Christ came to make individuals fulfill Socialism. Jesus Christ rested on a national basis. The Hebrew Law was not a law for individuals per se, but for a nation. The Hebrews were allowed to make slaves of other races, and make war on other races. God's ethics are evolutionary. Jesus Christ's ethics were evolutionary. He said, "Moses, for the hardness of your hearts" permitted certain things, but "in the beginning it was not so."

"I have many things to say to you but ye can not bear them now."

God, in His providence, chose a race (because its fathers had chosen Him) and tried to make that race righteous. In part He succeeded. We think of the Jews in the time of Christ as "hypocrites, Scribes and Pharisees," but we forget how far they had improved in morals. In the days of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, even their best men practiced polygamy and idolatry. Their religious rites were often corrupted into gross impurity. The grossness of this impurity is concealed in the King James translation, but scholars know how obscene it was. At least these grosser evils had been generally overcome in the days of Christ. The Law had made a basis for morality. On this basis Jesus stood. He was a good Jew. He was a patriot and nationalist and wept over Jerusalem. He obeyed the Hebrew Law, even the true ritual law. He was circumcized and baptized. He was made in his 12th year "a son of the law," conforming to modern confirmation or joining the church. He kept feast and fast. He preached in the Synagogues and worshipped in the Temple which he tried to purify. No Socialist ever condemned or denounced corrupt priests more bitterly than Jesus. Yet he bade his disciples obey the very priests whom he denounced, because they "sat in Moses' seat." He bade the man whom he healed go and show himself to the priest as the Law commanded.

Jesus Christ was a Conformist. He was loyal to his church, even though it was corrupt and though its chief rulers betrayed and crucified him. He came to fulfill the Law.

The Engine Off the Track

The Old Testament laid down the track upon which the train of the world's salvation is to move. The train did not move along the track, because it lacked motive power.

Jesus Christ did not come to lay down a new method, a new track, but to bring a new Power, a divine power to move along the track.

The modern church, captured and misled by capitalism has ignored the track. It has lesped the track. It is full of power, but it is a lost motive off the track and therefore often does more harm than good.

The Old Testament Socialism is the track. Jesus Christ is the Power to move the world along the track. Atheistic, materialistic Socialism sees the track, but has no divine power. The capitalistic church has power, but is not on the track. A socialistic church would be a church with power on the track. To get the church back onto the track is the mission of Christian Socialism.

We must recapture the Bible for Socialism, from its perversion by capitalistic theology and a mammonized church.

A HINT TO THE WISE

This is an excellent propaganda number, especially among Christians, Jews and other religious people. In bundles of ten or more, one cent per copy; 500 copies for $4.50; 1,000 copies $8.00.

DENYING JESUS

By Rev. John Morris Huggins

O Cross of Christ! Once raised on Calvary
To crucify the fawning shape of Fear,
Through One who never owned a tyrant's power
Or bent one sweet word to his listening ear;
But ever succored the oppressed who near
Him stood expectant in their misery,
And for their good gave Himself, hour by hour;
Let mighty condemnation from Thee fall
Upon the Man today, chastened and meek,
Who knows the ancient insult of the weak,
But, fearing Caesar, dare not speak at all;
He, Christ's own vicar, far removed and small,
Denying human freedom for His Plan,
Proclaims, in truth, "I do not know the Man!"

THERE STILL IS FAITH

By Winona C. Martin,
80 Lenox Road, Rockville Center, L. I., N. Y.

Suggested by the cross on Trinity's spire, overlooking Wall Street

I

Where Mammon's temples rear their heads on high—
A jagged line against the smoke-dimmed sky,
Where probity is bribed and bought and sold,
Where man returns to beast as bull and bear,
Where greed is rampant; Lord, thy cross is there—
"The golden rule against the rule of gold."

II.

Here o'er the din of traffic softly peals
The music of thy chimes, and o'er us steals
Sweet revery of a land so fair—so far.
Then soars the soul on earth-unfettered wings,
Freed from the deadly tyranny of things,
Which we then know for the dull dross they are.

III

Where selfishness leads every other vice
Behold thy cross, symbol of sacrifice!
Where men count gold the measure of man's worth
That lodestar gleams, and we are undismayed,
For, though thy coming, Lord, is long delayed,
There still is faith—is faith upon the earth.

THE CHRISTIAN SOCIALIST

Issued Weekly

PUBLISHED BY

The Co-Operative Printing Company

Suites 511-12, No. 56 Randolph St., Chicago, Illinois
Office Phone Central 4431

Subscription Price - - - - One Dollar Per Year
Six months 50c. Three months 25c.

Ten yearly subscriptions to one address for $5.00. Five yearlies to one address for $2.50. A CLUB OF FIVE yearlies to separate addresses $4.00.

Twenty six months subcards for $5.00. Forty three months subcards for $6.00.

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The weekly Christian Socialist was entered as second-class matter January 5, 1911, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under the act of March 3, 1879.

CHANGE OF NUMBER

No, Comrades, we have not moved again, but Chicago is having a complete readjustment of house numbering and the building which was No. 29 Randolph street is now No. 56 E. Therefore, please address all mail intended for us to NO. 56 E. RANDOLPH STREET, CHICAGO.

There's no use talking; a farmer can't succeed very well unless he raises his own help.—Ed. Howe.

This is true and explains why and how the small farmer is forced by the capitalist system to be one of the very worst exploiters of labor—even the labor of his own wife and children; yet he has no chance on the average to become well-to-do, his wife is doomed to lifelong drudgery, and his children, as a rule, never have a human chance to develop intellectually. Not for them the glories of art, music, literature, travel, and the wonders of science must remain to them unknown.

WILL YOU DO IT?

Every sane man knows that the Christian Socialist could not have had a selfish motive in revealing the evidence in the Barnes case. It meant nothing but the risk of its life—and the defenders of the accused officials, with every access to the list of party members, are striking at the heart of the Christian Socialist in every possible way. They have ample reason for not wishing to make the matter public.

Many comrades and many branches have sent us words of cheer and some have sent money. But the paper is running behind every week now, and whether it lives or not depends upon how many comrades are willing to back their appreciation with cash.

The papers which have begged the most and bled the comrades the most dare not publish the testimony as we have.

Will the comrades allow the weekly Christian Socialist to pay the death penalty for exposing the evidence in the Barnes case?

But let us tell you this: The same courage and determination that made the Christian Socialist, without capital, is behind it yet; and if the paper cannot live as a weekly, it will live as a semi-monthly; and if it fails as a semi-monthly, it will live as a monthly; and if it cannot find support as an 8-page paper, it will live as a four-page, or a two-page paper.

It shall not die—and it will continue to do its work.

But—**WILL YOU STAND BY US NOW AND DO ALL YOU CAN?**

There are readers of these lines who could send us $100, or $1,000, and be all the richer. Some can send $10 or less.

Buy stock now, order sub cards now, and send donations now.

It is up to you.

BECOME A STOCKHOLDER

We would like for every reader of the Christian Socialist to become a shareholder in the Co-Operative Printing Co., which publishes the paper, and become a part of the concern. This would enable you to be present at the annual meeting, either in person or by proxy, to vote on all matters there considered, including the election of Directors. To encourage you to do so, we offer to all stockholders the Christian Socialist and all books which we produce at 50 per cent discount. And for a limited time we will make the following offer:

1 share of Stock	$10
Ten yearly sub-cards	10
Total	$20
All for	$14

If you wish twenty regular (not special) six-month sub-cards in place of ten yearlies on this offer, all right.

The Christian Socialist, 56 E. Randolph St., Chicago.

INFORM YOURSELF

So much misrepresentation concerning the Barnes case is going the rounds by "the still hunt" method in the form of letters by those who have access to party lists that we must urge the comrades who wish truth and right to prevail to distribute our April 6th and April 20th issues among party members. We have cited the pages in the minutes (the typewritten copy) and all who desire may confirm our report by the minutes themselves. If the minutes are ever published in book form our page references in issues named, of course, will not correspond with the printed copies.

These issues may still be obtained in bundles for one cent a copy.

Talk about brotherly love as much as you please, people engaged in the same business will lie about each other.—Ed. Howe.

Yes, under Capitalism, "Business is Business."

I have never been robbed by sure enough thieves, but I have been robbed many times by schemes.—Ed. Howe.

Great is the competition of the Capitalist system.

Whereas, The Constitution of the United States has been clearly violated in depriving John J. McNamara of his liberty without due process of law; and,

Whereas, Such spectacular demonstrations are calculated to inflame and prejudice the public against one who has had no opportunity to defend himself; therefore, be it

Resolved, That we, the Christian Socialist Fellowship, in annual conference assembled, do indignantly protest against such high handed action as ungodly and wicked and unworthy the enlightenment of the twentieth century, and be it, further

Resolved, That we direct the attention of the church, especially, to the wrong and danger of premature judgment and condemnation, and that we call on the church to raise its voice against the power of Mammon, and to take its stand on the side of God and right and humanity.

For Young Crusaders

Conducted by M. Kathryn Spiers, 901 W. Main St., Richmond, Va.

THE MAN IN THE BOY

In the acorn is wrapped the forest,
In the little brook, the sea;
The twig that will sway with the sparrow today
Is tomorrow's sturdy tree.
There is hope in a mother's joy,
Like a peach in its blossom furled;
And a noble boy, a gentle boy,
A manly boy, is king of the world.

The power that will never fail us
Is the soul of simple truth;
The oak that defies the stormiest skies
Was upright in its youth;
The beauty no time can destroy
In the pure young heart is furled;
And a worthy boy, a tender boy,
A faithful boy, is king of the world.

The cub of the royal lion
Is regal in his play;
The eaglet's pride is as fiery-eyed
As the old bird's, bald and gray;
The nerve that heroes employ
In the child's young arm is furled;
And a gallant boy, a truthful boy,
A brave, pure boy, is king of the world.

—Selected.

* * *

Cotulla, Texas, March 6.

Dear Aunt Kathryn: I have been reading your writing in Young Crusaders for some time, and desire to express my thanks for the same. Our Young Crusaders need instruction, and to get it they need a department of their own. I am 19 years old, but not too old to help the thing along, and will (with your consent) write a little description of the poor Mexican laborer that slaves for the land owners of this country, telling of their lives and occupation, especially of the children, in my next letter. Wishing you great success in your work, I remain Yours truly,

Harold H. Wonder.

Thank you, Comrade, we will be glad to read what you can tell us about our poor neighbors in Mexico.

Manitou, Okla., March 8.

Dear Aunt Kathryn: As I have not seen any letters from Oklahoma children, I will try to write. I am 11 years old and I am going to school. We have forty-two pupils. I send you a little book, showing a picture of our schoolhouse, also the program for opening day of last term. Our school lasts seven months every year. Papa and mamma are Socialists and they get subs for several Socialist papers, including this. I hope you will send me your photo. We have a nice picture of Mr. Debs, and it is just like him, for we have seen him and heard him speak. Lovingly,

Grace Hogan.

Thank you for the nice letter, dear, and the interesting program. That list of good things that you had to eat is too good to print—it might make too many want to come out there to live, and it would be dreadful to crowd you! Just think, comrades—Eight different kinds of meat, three kinds of pie, same of cake, and so on and so on!

Sunnyside, Wash., March 6.

Dear Aunt Kathryn: I am a girl of 13 years of age, and am in the sixth grade. I do not hear much of Socialism at school, but my father is a rather enthusiastic Socialist, and I hear a good deal about it at home.

Local Sunnyside has a regular meeting every two weeks. I have taken part in some of their programs. I will give the first verse of one of my declamations:

THE PROTEST

(By Ella Wheeler Wilcox.)

Said the great machine of iron and wood,
"Lo, I am a creature meant for good."
But the criminal clutch of Godless greed
Has made me a monster that scatters need
And want and hunger wherever I go.
I would lift men's burdens and lighten their woe,
I would give them leisure to laugh in the sun,
If owned by the Many—instead of the One.

I wish I had a machine that would wash my dishes.

I hear a good deal of the Christian Socialist and the good work it is doing, and I am about ready to believe it myself. Your loving niece,

Laura Martin.

This letter was so beautifully written that I

could send it to the printer without copying it, which I was very glad of, as I am just back from Washington, D. C., where I have been attending the National Congress of Child Welfare, and am very tired and have much to do to catch up with my work. Can sympathize with our Young Crusader's desire for a dish-washer—but I want a vacuum cleaner, too, and —never mind! We will have all the latest improvements some day!

St. 37, Longs Hill, St. Johns, Newfoundland, March 26, 1911.

Dear Aunt Kathryn: I am a girl of 9 and go to school. I am in the third grade. I go to Sunday school and like the lessons very much, as the stories about Elijah, Ahab, Elisha, Benhadad and the others are interesting. I like my teacher, whose name is Miss Cooper. My papa teaches a class in Sunday school, too. He takes the **Christian Socialist**; that is how I came to know you. Papa tells me that he thinks that Virginia is not like our country at this time of the year. Just now our land is covered with snow, the trees have no leaves, and there are no flowers to see in our gardens and parks. The lakes are frozen into ice, which gives plenty of skating. In Virginia, so papa thinks, you have summer all the year round, and the flowers and trees are always in bloom. You have no cold, icy rooms to dress in when you get up in the morning or when you go to bed at night. Dear Aunt, is it true that the white people in Virginia think that the colored people are not as good as they are. As God made us all and put the same red blood in our bodies, this sounds queer. One of my friends, Nellie Dixon, is colored, and she is so kind and good I am very fond of her. I would like you to tell me something about Virginia. Are there many Socialists there? Do they read the Christian Socialist, and do the S. S. teachers use it in the Sunday school? In the **Christian Socialist**, March 16, I read a letter from Jennie Kennedy which I liked because of what she told about her father sending the C. S. to six church pastors and one priest. All the letters of the Young Crusaders were very nice to read.

There are only a few Socialists in Newfoundland, but they do not hide their light under a bushel. Meetings are held and the Social Democratic Herald, Cotton's Weekly, Clarion, and Chicago Daily Socialist and **Christian Socialist** are sent around. I hope Socialism will soon come. I have four sisters, all smaller than myself, and they, with myself, papa and mamma, make seven. Mamma, who has to wash and cook and do the housecleaning besides, has very little time for herself. Socialism, papa says, would make the work much lighter.

Tell me when you write if you have any little girls, and do they recite? What kind of games do they play, and do they go to Socialist meetings?

I hope to live to see Socialists in power, when all will share earth's happiness.

From your little comrade,

May Athena Grimes.

This letter was also wonderfully well written—almost as good as Comrade Laura's—and so interesting. You have certainly been well taught, dear, and made good use of your time.

SOCIALISTS NOW IN OFFICE IN AMERICA

(By National Socialist Press)

The following list of towns, cities and states that have elected Socialist officials has been compiled by W. J. Ghent, partly from press reports and partly from private information. It does not pretend to be strictly accurate. Socialists who are aware of any omissions or inaccuracies in the list are urged to write at once to W. J. Ghent, 240 House Office Building, Washington, D. C.

The list as compiled shows 1 member of Congress, 17 members of legislatures, 30 mayors or village heads, and 225 other elective officials.

Arkansas

Mena—1 alderman.

California.

Berkeley—Mayor, 2 aldermen, 1 member of board of education.
Neiderland—Mayor, 3 town officials.
Pasadena—Mayor.
Rancho—1 school trustee.
San Bernardino—Mayor (election contested), 1 alderman.
Sausalito—1 school trustee.

Colorado

Cold Creek—3 trustees.
Victor—Mayor, 4 city officials.

Idaho

Coeur d'Alene—Mayor, clerk and police judge, treasurer and 4 aldermen.
Pocatello—2 aldermen.

Illinois

Beckemeyer—1 trustee.
Belleville—1 alderman.
Canton—6 aldermen.
Davis—Mayor, 2 trustees.
Granite City—Mayor, 2 aldermen.
La Salle—1 alderman.
Marysville—Clerk, 1 trustee.
Mattoon—1 alderman.
O'Fallon—Mayor, marshal, superintendent streets, 2 aldermen.
Pana—1 alderman.
Portland—Clerk.
Rockford—Park commissioner, 2 aldermen.
Spalding—Clerk, 6 trustees.

Iowa

Belle Plaine—1 alderman.
Colfax—1 member school board, 1 alderman.
Muscatine—2 aldermen.

Kansas

Altoona—Police judge.
Arma—Mayor, police judge, 4 aldermen.
Columbus—1 alderman.
Curransville—Mayor.
Fredonia—2 aldermen.
Fort Scott—City attorney, 3 aldermen.
Girard—Mayor.
Osage City—2 aldermen.
Rosedale—1 alderman.

Massachusetts

1 member of Legislature.

Maine

Mechanics Falls—An alderman.

Michigan

Boyne City—1 supervisor, 1 alderman.
Flint—Mayor, 3 school trustees, 3 aldermen.
Greenville—Mayor, treasurer, 2 supervisors, 2 constables, 2 aldermen.
Jackson—Mayor, 4 town officials.
Muskegon—1 alderman.
South Frankfort—Village president, assessor, clerk, 2 school trustees.
Wilson—Mayor, 4 town officials.

Minnesota

Brainerd—3 aldermen.
La Porte—Mayor.
Ten Strike—Mayor, 3 town officials.
Two Harbors—Mayor, 3 aldermen.

Missouri

Cardwell—Mayor, marshal, 5 school trustees, 2 aldermen.
Gibson—Mayor, 2 school directors.
Maplewood—1 alderman.
Minden—Mayor, marshal, police judge, collector, 3 members board of education.
Mountain Grove—1 alderman.
Westport—1 member of school board.

Montana

Butte—Mayor, treasurer, police judge, 5 aldermen.
Duncan—Police judge, treasurer, 4 aldermen.
Helena—1 alderman.
Kalispell—1 alderman.
Lewistown—1 alderman.
Walkersville—1 alderman.

Nebraska

Beatrice—Mayor.
Broken Bow—1 alderman.
Haverlock—Police judge.
North Platte—Police judge, 2 aldermen.
Red Cloud—Mayor.
Wymore—Clerk, treasurer, 2 aldermen.

New Jersey

North Haledon—4 members school board.

North Dakota

1 member of Legislature.
Devil's Lake—3 aldermen.

Oklahoma

Coalgate—Assessor, 2 school directors, 2 aldermen.
Krebs—3 aldermen.
Harrah—Marshal, police judge.
McAlester—2 aldermen.
Wilburton—1 alderman.

Pennsylvania

1 member of Legislature.

South Dakota

Howard—1 alderman.

Texas.

Dalhart—I alderman.

Vermont

Bennington—City attorney.

Washington

Edmonds—Mayor, clerk, treasurer.

Wisconsin

1 member Congress.
12 members of lower house and 2 Senators in Legislature.
Brantwood—Town chairman, 3 town officials.
Elroy—1 alderman.
Grand Rapids—1 alderman.
Green Bay—Town chairman.
Manitowoc—Mayor.
Mellon—Assessor, controller, 1 alderman.
Milwaukee—Mayor, clerk, treasurer, attorney, controller, 2 judges, 11 supervisors, 21 aldermen. County officials: Sheriff, clerk, treasurer, attorney, coroner.
Racine—Police judge, 5 school supervisors, 1 alderman.
Sheboygan—1 school supervisor, 1 alderman.
Superior—1 supervisor, 2 aldermen.
Whitewater—Police judge, 3 constables, 1 alderman.

Geo. G. Hamilton of Oklahoma subscribes and writes, "My attention has been called to your publication and to the manly fight being made by your editor, Rev. Carr. I am not a Socialist but am interested in Socialism." We predict that it will not be long till this brother will be glad to be called a comrade and will help us in this work.

Comrades Martin Maclea of Ohio and A. J. Pangburn of New York each sent for 20 sub cards.

The Socialist Movement needs women. Needs the preacher, the doctor and the school teacher. The capitalist class know as long as they can control these elements they still have a lease on life. When the Socialist Movement realizes that when we control them, we have life, our battle will be well won.

Every woman, preacher, doctor and school teacher is vitally interested in three subjects that come directly into their lives; The Social Evil; The Liquor Question, and the relation of the Church to Social Problems.

No speaker or writer in the Socialist movement has ever been able to reach women as effectively as Kate Richards O'Hare and no one has given so many years of painstaking study to the three great problems. In the American movement she is considered authority on the Social Evil, the Liquor Problem, and the Church and Social Problems.

The result of fifteen years of Kate O'Hare's work has been condensed into three booklets that are no doubt destined to mark an epoch in Socialist literature:

"LAW AND THE WHITE SLAVER,"

"COMMONSENSE AND THE LIQUOR TRAFFIC,"

"THE CHURCH AND THE SOCIAL PROBLEMS."

Every man and woman should understand these three vital problems and these three booklets furnish a liberal education on them.

ORDER NOW.

Price ten cents each, the three for twenty-five cents.

NATIONAL RIP-SAW :: :: :: St. Louis, Mo.

THE NEW YORK LIBRARY

The International Sunday School Lessons for 1911

By Rev. Wm. A. Prosser, Pastor Hazelwood M. E. Church, Pittsburg, Pa.

GENERAL TOPIC: The History of the Decline and Fall of the Jews as an Independent Nation, or Lessons in the Necessary Evils of Monopoly.

GENERAL DIVISIONS: The 1st and 2d quarters, from January 1st to June 25th will give us the History of Judah and Israel to the Exile; and the 3d and 4th quarters, from July 2d to December 31st, will take us through the Exile and Return of Judah.

TIME AND PLACES: From 837-430 B. C. Palestine and Babylonia.

GENERAL LITERATURE: The Bible; the volumes bearing on this period in "The Historical Bible" and "The Student's Old Testament" series, by Prof. Charles Foster Kent; those in the "Semitic Series," by Prof. James A. Craig; "Capital," by Karl Marx; "Socialism," "Common Sense of Socialism," and the "Spiritual Significance of Socialism," all by John Spargo; "Socialism in Theory and Practice," by Morris Hillquit; "The Struggle for Existence," by Walter Thomas Mills; "Socialism from Genesis to Revelation," by Rev. F. M. Sprague.

There are many other useful books that might be named in this connection, but these are sufficient for our purpose. The best preparation for a proper reading and interpretation of the Bible is a pure and sympathetic heart, an unbiased mind, ability to understand good English and all the knowledge of historic and economic facts and forces you can command.

LESSON FOR MAY 21

The Song of the Vineyard—A Temperance Lesson. Isaiah 5:1-12

Golden Text, Isaiah 5:22: Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and the men of strength to mingle strong drink.

The author of the S. S. Lessons is in receipt of a letter, without return address, from a B. J. H. Thomas, asking certain questions about the books of reference published with the S. S. Lessons for the first few issues. If Mr. Thomas will write again, giving his address, I will gladly answer him.

Wm. A. Prosser,
648 2nd Ave., P'gh, Pa.

Let me warn you against dividing this fifth chapter of Isaiah into separate sections; against accepting it as a judgment pronounced against one particular sin and against a too narrow and personal application of its truth. Isaiah is not dealing with an individual but with the nation. He is not handling mere personal questions, but social questions. He is not dealing exclusively with the liquor problem, but with an economic and social system.

The chapter is a unit and cannot, on the basis of any workable canon of criticism, be divided into separate independent sections. The other half of the verse from which the the golden text is taken reads, "that justify the wicked for a bribe and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him." Which puts the political and judicial grafter in the same moral category with the drunkard and clearly indicates that the drunkard was not the only sinner Isaiah had his eye on. And the real burden of the "song" is not drunkenness at all but judgment against economic injustice and social iniquity. It is a chapter of Judgment, Divine vengeance, a series of five "woes" pronounced against as many different sins with economic exploitation heading the list. It could therefore more properly be called an "Economic Lesson" than a "Temperance Lesson."

The Parable

Through the use of this parable of the vineyard Isaiah sought to make clear to the mind and heart of his nation four very important truths.

First, they were Jehovah's people and the plant "of His delight." Like the vineyard, they had been selected with special care, cultivated and pruned with rare skill and watched over and defended that they might grow into a magnificent nation. They had been delivered from the iron heel of Egyptian tyranny, had been led into a land flowing with milk and honey and started on their national career with a constitution—laws—which if obeyed would produce a secure, prosperous and happy nation.

Second, they had been "planted" to practice Justice. All their special training and laws; all their sorrows and joys; all their successes and failures had been for the purpose to lead them to "do justly, love mercy and to walk humbly with their God."

They drew their monstrous system of iniquity by well woven arguments (cords) of falsehood and boldly declared that good was evil and evil good, darkness was light and light darkness, bitter was sweet and sweet bitter. Instead of bearing large, luscious, palatable fruit, they bore detestable and useless wild grapes.

Third, this perversion was sin. Their principles, practices and conditions were not the result of ignorance but of deliberate choice; of a conscious, wilful and defiant violation of the fundamental laws of their nation. To the mind of Isaiah these things constituted not simply questions or problems but a fact, a moral fact of tremendous significance. It was a forsaking of the laws of God which demanded only one solution, a national repentance and a return to first principles. That the vineyard had failed of the purpose for which it had been planted meant more than a question in economics and politics, it was a question in morals. It was a burning shame, a blasting disgrace, a dismal failure that merited destruction. He held the nation responsible for its own failure.

Fourth, this failure to fulfill its mission would inevitably bring destruction. Isaiah saw nothing but woe, woe for the exploiter, the grafting judge, the false teachers, the mercenary priest, the social and drunken parasite—woe for the whole nation.

This is the message of the "Song of the Vineyard." Do not blunder by singing but one stanza of it and playing on one string. The beauty and harmony of the song can be seen only by studying every line in it. Looking at it thus you will discover it to be a ringing message from a profoundly philosophic mind and a brave heart, a message not simply to an individual drunken sinner, but to a national economic and social sinner who is spending his stolen money and unmerited leisure on riotous living. It will also have a message for our day.

A Good Country

Isaiah described his country as a nation of people who were God's special choice and delight, splendidly located and large with possibilities and which started on its national career with every promise of long life, peace and prosperity. It was God's country; they were God's people, and God expected great things from them by way of establishing His kingdom among themselves and among the nations about them.

Ah, nations of the world, behold yourselves in the history of ancient Israel!

Whether we think of the world at large or our country in particular the assertions made by Isaiah about his nation hold good. We live in a very fruitful world, beautiful for situation and the admiration of every human soul. It is a world of endless variety, of matchless beauty and of limitless wealth. It is a world of design, morality, order and stability. It is well provisioned and intended to create and sustain, in peace and plenty, a race of stalwart men.

In a restricted sense the same is true of the political divisions of the earth we call nations; and especially of ours. Our land is well located, very fruitful, peopled with the choicest of earth's teeming millions and large with possibilities. Our national wealth is beyond computation, abundant in variety to meet every demand and our wealth-producing powers are so great that, with all the people working and an equitable distribution of wealth, we could produce sufficient to properly feed, clothe and house all the population of the globe.

We are called into being to practice justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God. We are God's vineyard planted with choice plants, trained and discipled for the purpose of bearing good fruit. We bear wild grapes at our peril.

The Actual Conditions

Isaiah found the national practices and conditions far different from what they ought to be. He found wild grapes where tame ones should have grown. He found people going to church, trampling God's courts, offering sacrifices and observing regular and special rites and ceremonies without a grain of regard for God and with no moral results. He saw the city full of harlots, thieves, grafters, gamblers, murderers and heard no voice lifted in ringing protest. He beheld mere children on the throne ruling over the destiny of the nation swayed by the dominance of ambitious women and the princes rebellious and companions of thieves. He saw the courts manned by men who thought more of bribes than of justice, who justified the exploiter for a share of the spoil and who robbed the innocent and helpless of their righteous claims. He saw swollen fortunes, ivory palaces, and "high society" existing alongside of degrading poverty, wretched tenements and the proletarian multitudes. He saw a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, childfen that deal corruptly; a nation of wounds, bruises, fresh stripes, with no soundness in it from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head. These were the social conditions, the wild grapes, the carefully selected and cultivated vineyard had produced. Like the barren fig-tree it had forfeited its right to cumber the ground. What a failure! What a disappointment!

The causes he saw were in the main three.

First, they had exchanged a form of democracy for a genuine monarchy. Ostensibly they had adopted this change of government to rid themselves of the defects of democracy but really it was for the purpose of imitating the customs of foreigners. This was clearly pointed out by Samuel at the time the change was made (1 Sam. 8:10-22).

Second, they had thrown aside their ancient law of tribal or collective ownership of property—land in this instance—for the private ownership of the same. This was first done after the adoption of the monarchial form of government and by the kings. The practice soon extended to the nobles and then it became general. The process of joining house to house and field to field (their form of wealth concentration) went on until there was no room for the people, until they were landless and reduced to tenants. How the process was carried on we had occasion to see in the method used by Ahab when he stole the vineyard of Naboth. The method was deception, bribery, force and murder, the very things Isaiah refers to in the first four chapters of his book.

And, third, they discarded Justice for force. No people ever started on their national career with a clearer consciousness of their purpose and mission than the Jews. From the beginning they were taught and disciplined in the principles of Justice, Mercy and Love. To do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with God were the fundamental principles of their Magna Charta. And yet no nation ever wandered farther from its purpose and more signally failed in its mission than this very people.

Isaiah is not wide of the mark. He is not only a true philosophical critic of his own age, but also of ours. He not only exposes to view the causes that played social havoc yesterday, but the causes that play social havoc today. He reveals the causes of the conditions of our day in the history of his own. You have only to change a few names, minor particulars and dates to read the history of conditions and causes of present world-wide civilization in this chapter.

Judgment

Isaiah saw not only conditions and causes but also consequences. He could see but one penalty for failure—destruction. The vineyard that failed to produce good fruit must be destroyed. The nation that failed to practice justice, economic, judicial and social justice, to build up a happy, united and prosperous people, to care for widows and defend the orphans, must go to the wall. He could see no other outcome for his nation. They had failed of their purpose and mission and they must perish.